

The Fire You Prevent May Be Your Own—Firemen

Junior Said To Be No. 1 Firebug Here

Would you deliberately burn down your house? Of course not. Some people, however, allow easily correctable fire hazards in their homes.

That's the word from Robert R. Lucas, Torrance fire marshal and head of the Bureau of Fire Prevention.

Junior Blamed

A compilation of the causes of fire during 1956 indicates that the biggest fire hazard is Junior, playing with matches. His curiosity about the pretty yellow flame was responsible for 90 fires in the city during the year. These included many in vacant lots and closets, where Junior went to play alone.

Junior can't be eliminated, but he can be taught the proper use of matches. If he is too small, matches and cigaret lighters can be kept out of his reach.

The careless smoker, who failed to put out his cigaret or left it dangling precariously on the edge of an ashtray, was responsible for some 51 fires last year. In third place as a fire cause was the improper use of appliances—to many on the same circuit, causing overloading of the wires.

Causes Found

A study of Torrance fires in which the starting agent could be reasonably determined indicated the following causes:

Children playing with matches, 90; smoking, 51; improper use of appliances, 48; illegal burning, 41; electrical wiring failure, 37; furnaces and heaters, 16; arson, 14; incinerators, 11; fireworks, 8; spontaneous combustion, 7; and last but not least, a mouse.

With the proper precautions, all of these fires might have been prevented, Lucas said, except possibly those started by arsonists and the mouse, whose fondness for chewing on match sticks started a garage blaze. Even then, a mouse trap might have taken care of him.

How to Prevent Fires

The duties of Lucas and Firemen Edgar Polston and John W. Millard, other members of the bureau, include telling people how to prevent fires. Last year, they made 2372 calls at Torrance homes and businesses, telling people how to secure their places against possible fire loss.

Carelessness on the part of the homeowner or businessman may cost him plenty, Lucas declared.

Inspections of private homes may be made only at the special request of the resident, but safety inspections of businesses, apartments, hotels, yards, and garages in all parts of the city are made regularly.

Conditions Checked

The Fire Department cooperates with the Department of Building and Safety, in reporting unsafe structures and requiring their improvement.

Last year, calls made in the interests of fire prevention included businesses, 682; vacant lots overgrown with weeds, 487; violations of burning hours, 154; miscellaneous (fireworks and Christmas Tree sales, etc.), 315; homes, 163; follow-ups after fires, 104; manufacturing, 89; cafes and restaurants, 82; hotels and apartments, 68; and talks at schools, 69.

Concept Changes

In the old days, the fire department was concerned only with putting out fires. Today, it is also concerned with preventing them before they occur.

Torrance's fire prevention detail started as a one-man operation in 1953 and Lucas was the one man. It has expanded to three men today, and may grow even larger in the future.

Possible programs for fire prevention in the future might include a periodic inspection



HANDY, BUT DANGEROUS . . . What firemen call the "octopus" system of wires is Fireman John W. Millard. Too many appliances on one small wall outlet dangerously overload the electrical system and cause them to deteriorate faster. When they deteriorate, that's when trouble begins, Millard warned. Extension cords are handy, but not when their capacity is overloaded.

of garages and yards in each fire company's area. There are now four fire stations in Torrance and the inspections might be made by firemen at each station in their own neighborhood.

Fire Marshal Program

Another possibility is establishment of a junior fire marshal program, similar to that in the Los Angeles school system. Children are active in this program, inspecting their own homes and neighborhoods to see whether there are any fire hazards. This would not be used as a threat against the parents, however, Lucas said, but merely as an educational program.

What can the average citizen do to safeguard his home against fire?

Suggestions Given

Lucas offered these suggestions to help prevent home fires:

1. Don't be a packrat, storing piles of things you might use some day in a garage or other storage area. If you must save them, store them neatly.

2. Appliances are wonderful gadgets, but don't try to use too many of them at once, especially from the same outlet. This overloads the wires dangerously.

3. Use the proper size fuses in your fuse box. If the instructions say to use a 20-ampere fuse, don't try to use a 30-ampere fuse.

Store Rags

4. Store your old paint rags in a metal can with a lid on it, not by the water heater or somewhere else where it might be ignited accidentally or by spontaneous combustion.

5. When cleaning ashes out of the barbecue, don't put them in a cardboard box.

6. Most important keep matches away from children, who like to see the bright glow of a flame and find them handy for exploring dark, crowded corners, especially closets. Teach children how to use matches.

7. Keep the weeds down around your house and garage. If a fire gets started in them, you may have plenty of trouble keeping your house from catching on fire.

Business Fires

In businesses, fires start most often from overloaded wiring, cleaners, or solvents used in the business, or rubbish containers filled with excelsior or other high combustible materials.

Most fires, Lucas declared, are not started by arsonists or accidents, but by carelessness on the part of the average citizen.

That's you.

Students Write Views on Study

As Torrance observes Public Schools Week this week, schools are seeking to focus attention on education today. As a class project, Ross Jackman's seventh grade class at Carr Elementary School was asked to write on the subject, "If There Were No Schools." The HERALD prints four of the essays, hoping that they will furnish a sample of how young people view their own educations.

Some people think that if there were no schools it would be wonderful. But if we did not have schools to teach education, we would not have a democracy. If we did not have schools to teach us about democracy, we would have very little freedom and probably would be fighting wars all the time. A democracy is made up of educated people believing in freedom.

Education consists of many things. One is self-realization, to have confidence in yourself. Another is to have civic responsibility, to be loyal to your city, state, and country. To have economic efficiency, to be able to obtain and hold a job is another important part of education. Education is also important in that it teaches us more about human relationship. We learn how to work and play with our classmates.

Thus we can have an educational system without a democracy, but we could never have a democracy without a good education system. Education is very important to our country in that through it the people learn more about democracy, and as they learn more about democracy our country becomes stronger and stronger.

Even if we do not like school, we should be happy that we live in a country where we can obtain a free education and become what we want to become.—Cheryle Sale.

If there were no schools, at first this statement might seem a bit odd. But, if you stop to think if there were no schools there would be no education and to have a strong America we need education more than anything else.

Education is important to us in more ways than one. If there were no schools to help us learn the vital facts and knowledge we need, who would support our country in staying out of wars and keeping peace with other nations? It is not just by fighting, but also by reasoning with other countries that keeps us from having more wars. It takes the ability to use good common sense to keep the peace between countries.

Education also means progress. We must not stop with the knowledge that we have already gained, but we must try to learn more about different things and to improve our way of living. For example, if a man makes a machine for bottling cokes two at a time, he should try to improve his machine so that he can bottle three at a time. His machine may not be perfect but at least there has been progress made. For any type of progress to be made man must have some type of education.

Schools mean education and education means a strong America, thus if there were no schools it would not be as funny as it sounds.—Robert Rose.

If you are between the ages of 5 and 16 and you heard this statement, you probably think that if there were no schools you could do anything you wanted to do for there would be no more studying.

Tartar Teen Talk

By OLLIE LESSIN

The Boys' and Girls' League backwards dance, the toddlers' trot, was a great success. Tartars dressed as little children last Friday night, complete with bottles, squirt guns, and machine guns. The prize for the best dressed little boy was presented by Boys' League President Ben Boegh to Tom Coleman; the runner-up was Jim Smith. The best dressed little girl was Georgia Sanford and the runner-up was Barbara Carter.

The American Field Service breakfast was held last Sunday at the Civic Auditorium. The Tartar Ladies served and the

our language, and our way of living. If there were no schools the children would only learn what their parents could teach them. There would be no government or laws of any kind. We would not know anything about our own country or any other countries.

Without education we would live a very primitive life. Our language would be the simplest form of communication and our homes would be similar to those of the caveman. For it is through education that we are able to communicate and able to build homes and buildings that are comfortable and safe.

But look at our lives now, everything we could ask for. What people of times ago would give to be able to live in the world of today. We are learning about democracy and the education system of other countries. There are many trade schools where a person can choose his own trade and learn all there is to know about it.

Education is a wonderful gift that we should all be very thankful for because it is through education that our country is progressing and we are the ones that are helping to build a democratic nation that we can be proud of.—Pamela Haas.

Key Club washed dishes. Over 500 tickets were sold, and the money made will go toward bringing an exchange student from Europe to THS.

The Silhouettes and the Hi-Toppers went riding through residential Long Beach last Saturday night. The occasion was the second annual hay ride.

This Sunday the Key Club will go to San Diego. Driving three 1957 Oscar Maples' station wagons, the Key Clubbers and their dates will picnic at noon and eat supper in a Balinese restaurant.

It's not too late to run for an office. Holding a class, league, or A.S.B. office can give a person a feeling of service to his fellow students. The officers elected this semester will take office next September.

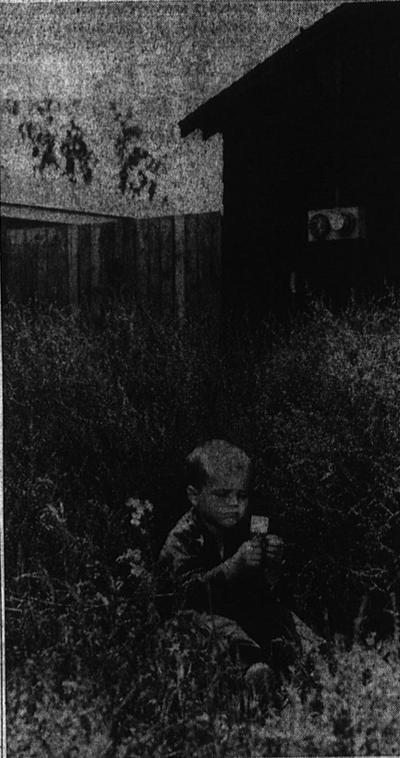
Service Guild To Note First Anniversary

A month full of activities is planned by the Wesleyan Service Guild, First Methodist Church group for employed women, as the ladies celebrate their first anniversary.

Officers for 1956 will hold their final executive meeting next Tuesday to wind up the year's business. On May 13, members of the Torrance Guild will go to Harbor City to install the officers of a new guild which they helped to organize.

On May 21, the regular meeting of the guild will be held at the church, with dinner at 6:30, followed by a business meeting, worship program, and review of the book, "Paul's Letters."

Installation tea and signing of the charter membership will be from 3 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, May 26.



NO. 1 FIRE HAZARD . . . David Polston, son of Fireman Edgar Polston, demonstrates the Number 1 cause of fires in Torrance—children playing with matches. Youngsters like to experiment with matches, especially in high weeds and dark closets. Polston cautioned parents to keep matches out of their children's reach and to teach them not to play with the dangerous little sticks. He also warned that high weeds next to fences and garages are prime fire hazards.

Art Opening Slated Today

A cooperative, non-profit art gallery, sponsored by 12 area artists, will open its doors this afternoon from 2 to 5 p.m. with a show entitled "South Coast Artists."

The Exodus Gallery, 255 Sixth St., San Pedro, is located in a building completely remodeled by the cooperating artists, who represent communities from Balboa to Manhattan Beach. Director of the gallery is Connor Everts, Torrance artist.

This is the first gallery of its

HEAR KNOX

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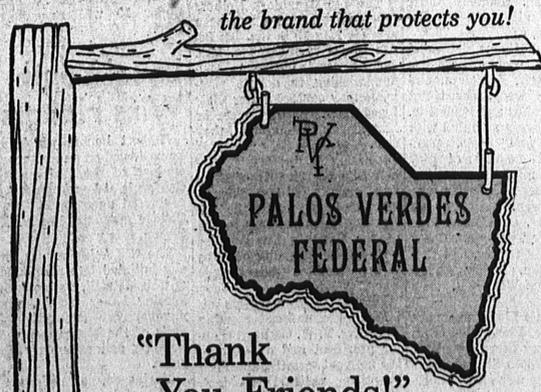
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